

trimmings such as mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday. They will tell stories, laugh and enjoy conversation with their loved ones. But there are other homes around the nation where the dining room table will be accompanied by an empty chair. In that chair once sat a husband, father, brother, sister, son or daughter. It sat a graduate, a friend and a United States warrior. It is now an empty reminder of a courageous American hero who gave his or her life for this country. Today we say a prayer for those families with the empty seat at the table, and we thank them for their sacrifice to this country. At Thanksgiving, Americans must be thankful for the heroes—and the families that they leave behind—that volunteer to fight 365 days of the year all across the world so that the rest of us can be free.

Thanksgiving is about more than a turkey and sitting around a dinner table. It is about giving thanks to God for all of the blessings we enjoy, including our troops and our freedom.

Where did Thanksgiving come from? In 1620, the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Fleeing religious persecution, they vowed to make a better life for all in North America. The Pilgrims, unaccustomed to the Massachusetts winter, would not have survived their first winter without the help of the Indians, who brought them food, saving them from starvation. During the following year, the Pilgrims' conditions improved in Massachusetts, leading to a productive harvest season. To celebrate and give thanks to God for the harvest, the Pilgrims invited the Indians who had helped them the previous winter, and held a three-day feast. This feast was the birth of what is today known as Thanksgiving.

A common misconception about Thanksgiving is that it was annually celebrated following 1621. Actually, for the next 150 years, the American colonists would only celebrate Thanksgiving when there was cause to do so. In 1789, President George Washington declared a National Day of Thanksgiving for the American colonists. In his Presidential Proclamation, Washington stated: "It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the Providence of Almighty God . . . to be grateful for His benefits, and to (request) his protection and favor. I, President Washington, recommend to the people of the United States, a day of public thanksgiving and prayer . . . to show the many favors of the Almighty and especially the opportunity for this form of government."

President Washington's belief in a National Day of Thanksgiving was not widely agreed upon or accepted throughout the colonies. For the next 70 years, a day of Thanksgiving was not routinely held. During the early 1800s, however, a female magazine editor named Sarah Josepha Hale began a 40-year campaign to institute a National Day of Thanksgiving. In November 1863, President Abraham Lincoln, agreeing with Sarah Hale, proclaimed a National Day of Thanksgiving for the last Thursday in November. Thus began the tradition of Thanksgiving Day. But, it was not until 1941, under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, that Thanksgiving was declared an official national holiday by Congress.

No matter what Thanksgiving traditions have been enacted since Thanksgiving Day was first declared in 1863, and officially recognized a national holiday in 1941, Thanksgiving has

always been about giving thanks to God for what we have and thinking of others who may not have what we do. This Thanksgiving Day, I invite this great nation to not lose sight of the true meaning of Thanksgiving and to do as the Pilgrims did before us: Offer a prayer of thanks to God for all of the gifts that he has bestowed.

And that's just the way it is.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VICKY HARTZLER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, December 1, I was unable to vote due to a conflicting obligation in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

On rollcall No. 872, "nay";
On rollcall No. 873, "aye";
On rollcall No. 874, "no";
On rollcall No. 875, "no";
On rollcall No. 876, "no";
On rollcall No. 877, "no";
On rollcall No. 878, "no";
On rollcall No. 879, "no";
On rollcall No. 880, "aye"; and
On rollcall No. 881, "yea."

OPPOSITION TO H.R. 3010 AND H.R. 527

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose H.R. 3010 and H.R. 527, bills that would create unnecessary requirements and hurdles to federal rulemaking. These bills seriously hinder the ability of federal agencies to protect our public health, including the safety of our food, our drinking water, the toys our children play with, and the quality of the air we breathe. These bills would create excessive delays for important rules that help provide workplace safety, consumer protection, support for small businesses, and veterans' assistance. Both these bills would add a cost to the taxpayers—H.R. 3010 would impose enormous costs by requiring a cost-benefit analysis of even the most minor of rules and CB0 estimates H.R. 527 would cost \$80 million just in the next few years. By expanding judicial review H.R. 3010 will favor well funded special interests, a blatant attempt to impede an agency's factfinding process. Such processes will create greater and extended amounts of uncertainty, making it harder for businesses small and large to plan for the future. I urge my colleagues to vote No on these overreaching and onerous bills.

HONORING TONY STEWART

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate one of Columbus, Indiana's most famous

sons, the 2011 NASCAR Sprint Cup Champion, Tony Stewart. Indiana has long been known as the world's capital of auto racing and Hoosiers are proud of our home-grown NASCAR champ.

In a season finale that went down to the last lap, Tony drove what he called the greatest race of his life. His victory at Homestead-Miami Speedway clinched the season championship and cemented his status as one of stock car racing's all-time greats.

Tony's racing career began like many other aspiring young racers—behind the wheel of a go-kart. In 1983, at the age of twelve, Tony won his first championship. By 1989, he had moved from go-karts to open-wheel machines and captured the National Midget championship in 1994. The next year, he won the United States Auto Club's Triple Crown. In 1996, Tony demonstrated his prowess for racing at the Brickyard by capturing Rookie of the Year honors at the Indianapolis 500 and followed up with an IndyCar championship a year later.

After becoming a full-time NASCAR driver in 1999, Tony won three races en route to becoming NASCAR's Rookie of the Year. Three seasons later, he won his first NASCAR championship. In 2005, Tony won the Brickyard 400 before a hometown crowd and went on later in the season to take his second title.

The 2011 season will long be remembered for Tony's historic run in the Chase for the Sprint Cup. As a testament to the tenacity and poise of the entire Stewart-Hass Racing team, Tony brought the number fourteen to victory lane in five of the ten races that make up the Chase.

Mr. Speaker, Hoosier race fans like myself have come to know Tony Stewart as a tremendous competitor. Whether he is racing the short tracks and dirt ovals all across Indiana, or at our famous Brickyard, Tony Stewart is a true champion.

ANNOUNCING RECIPIENTS OF THE INAUGURAL CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION FOR THE THIRD DISTRICT OF TEXAS—PETER W. MALIK

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to announce before my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives the names of eleven distinguished military veterans and community servants who call the Third District of Texas home. For their selfless service and dedication to their neighbors and nation, the following individuals have been selected as recipients of the inaugural Congressional Veteran Commendation:

Colonel Peter W. Malik of McKinney, Texas serves in the United States Army Reserve as Commander of the 90th Sustainment Brigade in Little Rock, Arkansas. Malik has deployed in support of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. He also provided critical logistical support for a rescue mission of American hostages in Colombia while assigned to U.S. Army South.

During his 2005 tour of duty in Afghanistan, a volunteer assignment, Malik ran several